Cable Franchising in Seattle

- Authority derived from Title VI of Telecommunications Act (47 USC521-572)
- SMC 21.60 Seattle Cable Code
- Telecom regulated under Title II (federal and state)
- Internet Title I, virtually unregulated
- Existing regulatory framework under stress due to technological advances

Cable Franchising in Seattle

- City can require: (through franchise and/or code)
 - Legal, financial and technical qualifications
 - Appropriate management experience
 - Compensation for use of ROW (franchise fees)
 - Consumer protection and privacy standards
 - Cable-related benefits
 - Broad programming categories
 - Insurance, bonding and indemnification
 - Buildout
 - PEG channels and facilities

PEG Channels

- Authority: 47 USC Sec. 531
 - Franchising authorities may require cable operators to set aside video channel capacity for local, non commercial PEG programming.
 - Cable operators expressly prohibited from exercising any editorial control
 - City can require capital support for PEG
 - If City requires operating support cable operators can deduct from franchise fees
 - All costs passed through to subscribers

PEG in Seattle

- ▶ 16 possible channels (8 digital; 8 analog)
- 7 analog channels currently programmed
 - 1 Public SCAN
 - 5 Educational (UW, UW2, SPS, CC, KCTS plus)
 - 1 Government Seattle Channel
- City provides operating and capital \$\$ for SCAN and Seattle Channel. Educational channels are self supporting
- RFP for new model of Public Access expected March 21

Seattle Broadband Initiative

- ▶ 2004–Present
- Reasons
 - Policy failure
 - Market failure
 - Divergent interests
 - Controlling destiny
- Studies
 - Futurists
 - Task force report
 - Consultants

Federal Telecom Policymakers



Market Failure in Seattle



- Incumbent telco cannot compete
- Satellite, Wi-Fi not viable stand-alone alternatives
- Potential monopoly control
- Cable lacks incentive to innovate in Seattle
- Will invest only in competitive areas

Broadband Initiative: Diverging interests

We have arrived at a critical juncture in the evolution of the Internet where the economic interests of the cable and telco incumbents and the public interest diverge.

- Broadband Internet provides a powerful, low cost platform for innovation where anyone can create new services, applications and business models.
- This same capability threatens existing business models of cable/telecom companies so they will attempt to restrict what is possible.

Which way will we head?

Cable/Telco Drivers that will shape Broadband: Increasing Profits/Maximizing Shareholder Value Next Quarterly Report

- Consolidation and Vertical Integration (NBC Universal, Wireless)
- Discriminatory transport
- Bandwidth as scarce resource (upstream)
- Diminished consumer protections
- Compromised consumers privacy rights
- High cost per megabit
- Meter Internet use and use bandwidth caps
- Minimize taxes and fees
- Limit social obligations
- Minimize regulation
- Protect existing business models
- Restrict competition
- Maximize return on sunken investments

Public Interest Drivers: Maximize Social and Economic Benefits of True Broadband, Capture Positive Externalities

- Promote Social Inclusion
- Create a Sustainable Environment
- Transform Public Education
- Improve quality and cost of health care delivery
- Empower citizens
- **Enhance Civic Discourse**
- **Ensure diverse sources of news and opinion**
- E-Government
 - Improve Municipal service delivery
 - Enhance democratic process and government transparency
 - Save \$\$



Public Interest Drivers Maximize Social and Economic Benefits of Broadband

- Maintain global economic competitiveness
- Retain high tech workers
- Create Transportation options
- **Empower small business; new spin-offs**
- A platform for Broadband service competition and continuing Innovation to address community needs
- Metro Broadband Intranet w/ Internet



Broadband Initiative

"Broadband for All: Within a decade all of Seattle will have affordable access to an interactive, open, broadband network capable of supporting applications and services using integrated layers of voice, video and data, with sufficient capacity to meet the ongoing information, communications and entertainment needs of the city's citizens, businesses, institutions and municipal government".

- **•ONLY FTTP CAN DELIVER**
- City Continues to Study Feasibility

